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## PRE-GENEVA CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS - XII

French hopes for Indochina settlement at Geneva continue:  
Strong parliamentary and public opinion pressing for a negotiated settlement of the Indochina war at Geneva has forced the Korean question into the background in French thinking. The government, however, has given no clear indication of how it hopes to conduct negotiations to end the war. In preliminary talks with American representatives, some officials have indicated interest in a simple cease-fire as the first move, but side-step the problem of doing this without de facto recognition of the Ho regime. Citing the example of Korea, they point out that it is possible to end the fighting without having a political settlement, and army experts are now working on the problem of military safeguards during the truce period.

Foreign Ministry representatives base their hope of achieving a cease-fire on Soviet fears of an expanded war, Chinese fears of American intervention, and both Vietnamese and Viet Minh reluctance to face increased Chinese influence in Vietnam. Even before the Moscow radio's "peace feeler" of 18 April, Foreign Minister Bidault seemed to put considerable faith in Soviet offers to help to end the war. Furthermore, since Secretary Dulles' recent visit to Paris, his "united action" proposal is officially interpreted as having solidified the West's position and has increased the hope that Geneva will produce a settlement.

Recent Soviet propaganda on Geneva: Most of the Soviet comment on Geneva conference issues last week was discussed in the context of Secretary Dulles' mission to London and Paris. This trip was said to have been prompted by the differences between the United States and its Western allies produced by Dulles' demands for "united action" in Indochina. Pravda described at great length the indignation with which these demands were received in Britain, saying that the "papers wrote openly of a conflict between the Western allies."

The chief purpose of the "blitz journey," according to Izvestia, was to solidify control over the Western powers before Geneva, slap into shape a NATO-like Pacific pact, and get its members to issue a "provocative warning" to China.

State Dept. review completed

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Peiping radio stressed this same theme, charging that Dulles' aim was to tie the hands of the British and French and to force them to take common action with the United States in sabotaging the conference and extending the war.

After describing the "gross pressure" which Dulles applied in London and Paris, Soviet commentators explain that the mission did not yield the desired results because of the "stormy indignation in Western European public opinion which the British and French governments could not fail to take into consideration." Moscow radio asserted that the communiques issued after the talks showed that the "project of united action has been shelved for the time being" and that Dulles "only managed to get a promise that some new Pacific alliance will be created similar to the Atlantic alliance."

The "twin brother of NATO" will comprise the large colonial powers and the puppet regimes in Asia which they control. This "alliance of masters and servants" is said to be aimed at extending the Indochina war. Indonesian listeners are told that "Thailand and the three puppet states of Indochina will be included to give the organization an Asian flavor" and that this bloc is designed to preserve colonialism, to launch aggression against peace-loving people and to start another war.

Moscow radio's 18 April statement that the Viet Minh "is prepared to begin negotiations on a cease-fire" is merely the latest in a long series of references to Ho Chi Minh's 29 November interview with a Swedish paper in which he declared his readiness to consider a French armistice proposal. These repeated reminders of the Ho interview are designed to serve a dual purpose: first, to contrast a Soviet bloc anxious to "reduce tensions" and end the Indochina war with American efforts to increase tensions and expand the war; second, to induce France to take the initiative in opening truce talks with the Viet Minh, thereby extending de facto recognition to a regime which Soviet propaganda describes as "the only lawful and sovereign government in Vietnam." The 18 April broadcast openly invited France to open truce talks by suggesting that "an expression of good will on the part of the French authorities would produce a real possibility for the restoration of peace in Indochina. This point assumes particular importance at present, on the eve of the Geneva conference."

In regard to Vice President Nixon's statement regarding the possibility of sending American troops to Indochina, Pravda's New York correspondent commented on 21 April that

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Nixon expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the French forces are suffering defeat in the war against the Indochinese people and placed the entire blame on the French Command which has proved unable to crush the national liberation movement. He also declared that Nixon "unwittingly gave away the plans of the United States aggressive elements, declaring in advance that any peace negotiations are useless" and served notice that the United States "must do everything in its power to keep France from ending the war in Indochina."

This commentator concluded by asserting that the American rulers are "irrevocably isolating themselves" by ignoring world public opinion which demands a settlement of disputed issues.

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